



Scotts Hill Baptist Church

GOD'S EXIT PLAN • THE PLAGUES • EXODUS 7-10 • 2/23/2025

MAIN POINT

When facing trying circumstances, God calls us to recognize who He is and trust what He will do.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Share about a time when unforeseen circumstances forced you to change your plans.

How do you tend to respond to unexpected circumstances? Why do you tend to respond that way?

Despite the fact that God had warned Moses that Pharaoh would not let the Israelites go (Ex. 3:19-20), Moses was deeply discouraged when Pharaoh refused to let Israel go and increased their labor. Moses said, "O Lord, why have you done evil to this people? Why did you ever send me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has done evil to this people, and you have not delivered your people at all" (Ex. 5:22-23). In Exodus 6, God responds to Moses' discouragement by reminding Moses who He is. We have all faced similar situations when things didn't go the way we planned and God didn't meet our expectations. In such situations, we need the same reminder God gave to Moses, we need to be reminded of who God is.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ EXODUS 6:1-8.

What is the significance of the name Yahweh (written as “LORD” in many English Bible translations)? Why do you think God specifically identified Himself by name before and after the promises in these verses?

Why did Moses need to be reminded of God’s name? Why might we need to be reminded of God’s name?

The divine name Yahweh, “I am,” reminds us that God is the one true being. He is eternal, immutable, omnipotent, and omnipresent. God is glorious and powerful beyond compare. By first setting our focus on who God is, we can confidently trust Him to fulfill His promises in His timing.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ EXODUS 7:1-4, 7:14-16; 8:1-7.

God could have chosen a limitless number of ways to free His people. What does it indicate that He repeatedly used Moses and Aaron? What does that mean about the way He wants to use you today?

Did God hate the Egyptians? Why or why not?

What did God have Moses and Aaron do before He sent each of the plagues? Why?

Each of the plagues are preceded by warnings from God that Pharaoh should let the Israelites go. These warnings are a form of grace—God gave Pharaoh and the Egyptians an opportunity to repent. Furthermore, even the plagues themselves are a form of grace as they display the power of the Lord and the powerlessness of the Egyptian gods. As we will see, these plagues opened the eyes of some Egyptians to see that the Lord is God.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ EXODUS 7:5; 7:17; 8:10; AND 9:14-17.

What do you know about Egyptian religion? How did the plagues call into question the validity of the many Egyptian gods?

How did the plagues discredit Pharaoh?

Ancient Egyptians believed in many gods. Some Bible scholars believe that each of the ten plagues correspond to specific Egyptian “gods,” demonstrating that the Lord has power

over the various things these gods were believed to be sovereign over. Ancient Egyptians also believed that the Pharaoh was the governor of the universe the gods had made and was to be worshiped as such. The plagues also function to unmask Pharaoh's claims to be divine, because they demonstrate His power over such fundamental realities as nature, light, and life.

What impact do you think God's foretelling of the events of their meeting with Pharaoh had on Moses and Aaron? How often do you consider the events of your life from the perspective of God's omniscience (all-knowing)?

What did God communicate to the Egyptians through the plagues? What did God communicate to the Israelites?

Why did God strike Egypt but spare Israel?

The ultimate purpose of all of God's actions is to display His glory. God said He would stretch out His hand against the Egyptians so that they "shall know that I am the LORD" and so that they would realize "there is no one like the LORD our God" (Ex. 7:17, 8:10). The only reason that we are given as to why God saved Israel is that the Israelites are His chosen people (Ex. 9:17; see also Deuteronomy 7:7-9). In other words, they were not saved because of their works, but because of God's grace.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ EXODUS 7:21-22, 8:7, AND 8:16-19.

How did Pharaoh's magicians respond to the first few plagues (Ex. 7:22; 8:7)?

What is foolish about their response? What does this tell us about the foolishness of worshiping anything other than the Lord?

What did the magicians finally realize after the plague of the gnats (8:18-19)?

The magicians were likely pressured by Pharaoh to try to replicate the plagues in an attempt to discredit Moses and Aaron. However, if they really wanted to demonstrate the power of their "gods," they should have reversed the plagues and avoided the devastation they caused. Finally, after being unable to come up with a trick to replicate the plague of the gnats, the magicians acknowledged the supremacy of the Lord and said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God" (8:19). Thus the plagues not only demonstrate God's glory but also His mercy in calling both Israel and Egypt to recognize the foolishness of worshiping other gods.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

How has God shown you His glory recently? How could we as a group encourage each other to devote ourselves to living for the glory of God?

What are some of the most common ways humanity hardens its hearts?

What is one way you are tempted to harden your heart?

What is one step you might take this week to turn your heart from worshiping such things and devote it solely to the Lord?

PRAYER

Each time you read the Bible this week, make a list of what the passage you are reading tells you about God. As you pray, refer to your list and thank God for revealing Himself to you. Ask Him to remind you of who He is as you seek to devote yourself to Him.

COMMENTARY

| EXODUS 7

7:3-5. God promised to harden Pharaoh's heart (cp. 4:21), this time using a word that also describes the oppression that Pharaoh inflicted on the Israelites. Pharaoh had made their slavery "difficult" or "hard" (1:14; 6:9; Dt 26:6), and in return, his heart would become "hard." This way it would be clear that when the Israelites left Egypt it was not because of the persuasiveness of Moses or the wise leadership of Pharaoh. Earlier the Lord had said that as a result of His actions, the Israelites would know Him as Yahweh their God (Ex 6:7). Now He said that also the Egyptians will know that I am Yahweh by the way He would bring the Israelites out of Egypt. This continues and expands the theme of action leading to knowledge of the Lord.

7:14. The word hard (lit "heavy") represents a Hebrew figure of speech. In English to have a "heavy heart" typically means to be troubled or sad. But the Hebrew term for "heavy" could describe a mouth and tongue that did not speak well (4:10), eyes that did not see (Gen 48:10), and ears that did not hear (Isa 6:10; 59:1; Zech 7:11). In both Egyptian and Hebrew, the heart (like the mind)—as the center of mental, emotional, and volitional

activity—was supposed to listen and respond appropriately (Dt 30:17; 1Ki 3:9; Solomon asked to be given “a hearing heart”). Pharaoh was failing to respond as he ought.

Pharaoh’s “heavy” heart registered another problem, because according to Egyptian beliefs, gods would weigh a person’s heart after death to determine his destiny in the afterlife. If it was heavy by comparison with a feather, a symbol for wisdom, then a fierce god stood by to devour the individual. Elsewhere in the OT sin is spoken of as heavy and as making the heart heavy (Gen 18:20; Ps 38:4; Isa 1:4; 24:20), and the Lord is the One who weighs hearts, which makes Him the ultimate Judge of all, including Pharaoh and other kings (1Sam 2:3; Pr 16:2; 21:2; 24:12; Dan 5:25-28).

| EXODUS 8

8:8. Pharaoh’s request put Moses in a situation similar to that of Abraham in Gen 20:7,17; both were called prophets, both prayed for a foreign ruler, and the Lord answered both with relief (Ex 7:1; 8:13-14). The wording of Pharaoh’s request shows that he understood what had happened and what he ought to do.

8:9-10. The opportunity for Pharaoh to choose the time would show that the end of the plague was under the Lord’s control. Unless Pharaoh’s answer, Tomorrow, was idiomatic for “immediately,” or “as soon as possible,” his choice postponed the end of the plague until the next day. The response to Moses’ prayer pointed to the Lord’s incomparability; He could start and stop this plague at will.

| EXODUS 9

9:13-17. The Lord could easily have destroyed Pharaoh and his people without plagues or the hardening of Pharaoh’s heart (cp. Dan 2:20-21), but these events were designed to show the Lord’s incomparability (there is no one like Me in all the earth). Thus God now made for Himself the claim that Moses made for Him earlier (8:10). The Lord described Pharaoh as still acting arrogantly. Such statements might seem arrogant and egotistical, but taking Exodus as a whole, they demonstrate the truthfulness of the claims and show that the Lord is just and compassionate. Throughout the conflict with Pharaoh, the Lord was demonstrating His right to rule while calling for allegiance and obedience.